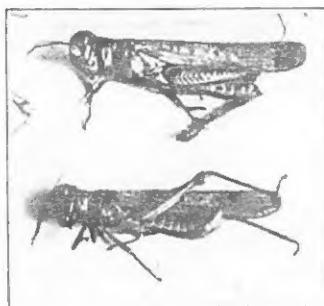


7. A Year of Calamities.

1856.

Grasshoppers and Crop Failures. Eighteen hundred and fifty-six was a year of calamities for Utah.



GRASSHOPPERS, OR LOCUSTS.

The crops of two seasons had failed, and another famine threatened the people. The crop failure of 1854 was owing to a visitation of grasshoppers, which were almost if not quite as destructive as the crickets. Unlike those voracious pests they had wings and could fly beyond the reach of

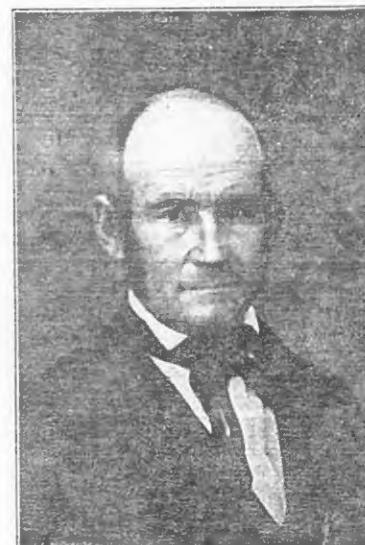
their pursuers. The following year the locusts returned, and during the summer, in many parts of the land, they devoured every green thing visible.

Drouth, Frost and Famine. Added to that plague there was a serious drouth, which well nigh completed the work of devastation. Then came the winter—one of the severest ever known in Utah, burying the grazing lands under heavy snows and causing the death of thousands of animals. Many of them were

beef cattle that would have supplied the market next season. The loss in horses and sheep was also heavy.

During the early months of the new year the people suffered much privation. Many, as before, were driven to the necessity of digging and eating roots—the sego, the artichoke, and other wild growths—to eke out an existence until harvest time.

Ministering to the Needy. All were not alike destitute. Some, foreseeing the straitness, had provided against it. Their bins and barns were full, while others were empty. Those who had, gave to those who had not, and the full larders and store-houses were drawn upon to supply the needy and prevent suffering. Among the most provident and the most benevolent were Heber C. Kimball, at Salt Lake City, and John Neff, on Mill Creek.



HEBER C. KIMBALL.

These men and others stood like so many Josephs in Egypt to the hungry multitude. They took no advantage of their neighbors. Where they did not give outright, as was often the case, they sold at moderate